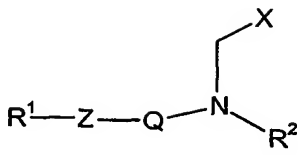
CLAIMS

1. A compound of formula (I):



(I)

wherein

R^1 represents optionally substituted C_{4-12} alkyl, optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkylaryl, or optionally substituted 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl;

Z represents a bond, CH_2, O, S, SO, SO_2, NR^4, OCR^4R^5, CR^4R^5O, or Z, R^1 and Q together form an optionally substituted fused tricyclic group;

Q represents an optionally substituted 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl ring;

X represents COR^3 or $N(OR^8)COR^9$;

R^2 represents SO_2R^{10} or $SO_2NR^{10}R^{11}$;

R^3 represents OR^6, NR^6R^7 or NR^6OH;

R^4 and R^5 each independently represents H, C_{1-6} alkyl or C_{1-4} alkylaryl;

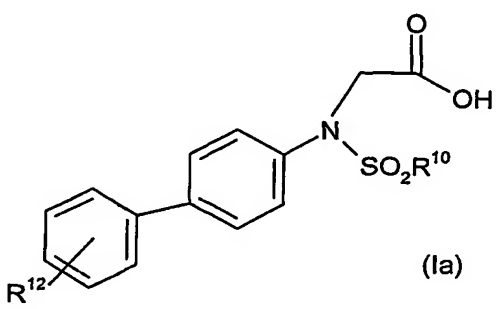
R^6 and R^7 each independently represents H, C_{1-6} alkyl, or C_{1-6} alkyl substituted with one or more heteroaryl groups, or R^6 and R^7 together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form a 5- or 6- membered ring which may optionally include 1 or more further heteroatoms selected from O, S and N;

R^8 and R^9 each independently represents H or C_{1-6} alkyl;

R^{10} and R^{11} each independently represents H or C_{1-6} alkyl; and

and physiologically functional derivatives thereof, with the exception of N-(ethoxycarbonyl)-N-[4-(1H-tetrazol-1-yl)phenyl]glycine.

2. A compound as claimed in claim 1 of formula (Ia):



(Ia)

wherein R^{10} represents H or C_{1-6} alkyl;
R^{12} represents H, halo, CF_3, cyano, OCF_3, nitro, OR^{13}, SR^{13} , COR^{13} or C_{1-6} alkyl;
R^{13} represents C_{1-6} alkyl or C_{1-4}alkylaryl;
and physiologically functional derivatives thereof.

3. A compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 for use in medicine.

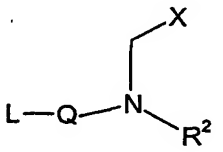
4. A method for the treatment of a human or animal subject suffering from or susceptible to an autoimmune disorder or an inflammatory condition which method comprises administering to said human or animal subject an effective amount of a compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2.

5. The use of a compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of inflammatory conditions or autoimmune disorders.

6. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier therefor, and optionally one or more other therapeutic agents.

7. A process for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) as defined in claim 1, which process comprises:

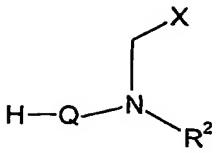
(A) for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents a bond and R^1 represents an optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkylaryl or an optionally substituted 5- or 6-membered aryl or heteroaryl, reacting a compound of formula (II):



(II)

wherein R^2, Q and X are as previously defined for formula (I) and L represents a leaving group, with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^1; or

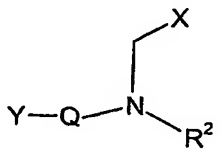
(B) for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents a bond and R^1 represents an optionally substituted C_{4-12}alkyl, reacting a compound of formula (III):



(III)

wherein R^2, Q and X are as previously defined for formula (I), with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^1; or

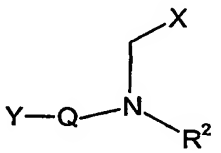
(C) for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents O, S, SO, SO_2, NR^4 or OCR^4R^5, and R^1 represents an optionally substituted C_{4-12}alkyl, reacting a compound of formula (IV):



(IV)

wherein X, R^2 and Q are as previously defined for formula (I), and Y represents OH, SH, NR^4H or HCR^4R^5, with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^1 followed in the case where Y is SH by optional oxidation of the sulphide to the sulfoxide or the sulfone; or

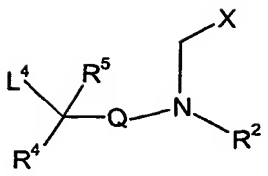
(D) for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents O, S, SO, SO_2, or NR^4, and R^1 represents an optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkylaryl or an optionally substituted 5- or 6- membered aryl or heteroaryl, reacting a compound of formula (IV):



(IV)

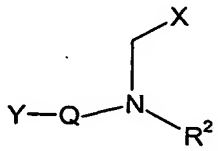
wherein X, R^2 and Q are as previously defined for formula (I), and Y represents OH, SH or NR^4H, with a reagent suitable to couple to the group R^1, followed in the case where Y is SH by optional oxidation of the sulphide to the sulfoxide or the sulfone; or

(E) for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents OCR^4R^5 and R^1 represents an optionally substituted C_{2-6}alkylaryl or an optionally substituted 5- or 6-membered aryl or heteroaryl, reacting a compound of formula (V):


(V)

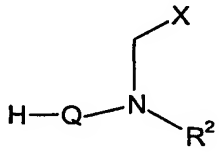
wherein X, R^2 and Q are as previously defined for formula (I) and L^4 is a suitable leaving group, with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^1-O; or

(F) for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents CR^4R^5O, reacting a compound of formula (IV) :


(IV)

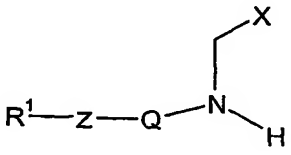
wherein R^2 and Q are as previously defined for formula (I), and Y represents OH, with a reagent suitable to introduce the group $R^1CR^4R^5$-; or

(G) for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) wherein Z represents CH_2, reacting a compound of formula (III):


(III)

wherein R^2, Q and X are as previously defined for formula (I), with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^1CH_2;

(H) reacting a compound of formula (VI)


(VI)

or a protected derivative thereof, wherein R^1, Z, Q and X are as previously defined for formula (I), with a reagent suitable to introduce the group R^2 as previously defined for formula (I): or

(J) carrying out a process selected from processes (A) to (G) followed by interconversion of one or more functional groups.